

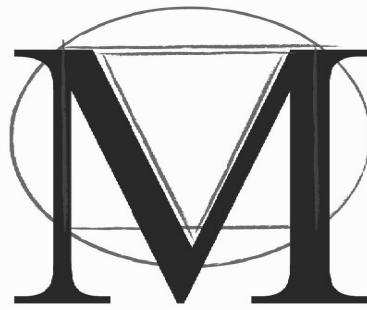
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Thanks To: Michael Auda
And Matt Sullivan

Bruce Rasmussen, Editor
BruceRass@wi.rr.com



MINIKANI
ALUMNI
COMMUNITY
I'm comin' home to you...


NEWSLETTER

"Schedule Changes You Should Know"

Add To Your Calendar

The very popular "Dinner Around The World" Alumni Dinner will be held again this year. Mark your calendars now for Saturday, March 3, 2012. As you may remember, the dinner gives alumni a chance to get together with other alumni for a meal.

Actually, it can be just that simple. Last year there were alumni in different parts of the world who couldn't join others. They took the opportunity of the Dinner to spend some time thinking about camp, eating camp-like food, and looking at camp memorabilia. Some spent the time sharing camp memories with their families. Others were able to get together in groups of alumni (as large as 20) and enjoy a meal together. Everyone seemed to have a great time.

If you would like to volunteer to organize a dinner in your area, contact Jason Horowitz at jasonlhorowitz@gmail.com. He can also help you get in touch with other alumni in your area. 

Subtract From Your Calendar

There will be no Alumni Reunion Weekend at Minikani this August. Faced with a difficult decision, the Alumni Board of Directors decided to make the event a biennial affair, meaning that it will be held every other year. The next Reunion Weekend will be held in August of 2013.

There is an alternative to the Alumni Weekend if you are interested. Camp Minikani has a Family Weekend during both Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends in 2012. You stay in cabins and eat in the dining hall and enjoy all the fun that camp has to offer. These family weekends are open to everyone, not just alumni. If you are interested, you can go to the Minikani Website at <http://www.minikani.org/Family-Programs-Overview.php> for more information.

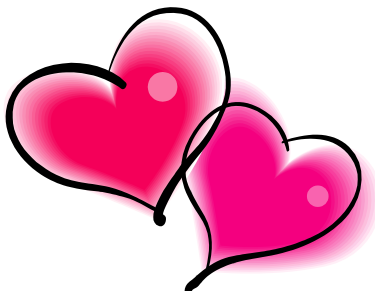


“Monte Carlo Madness”

It was the place to be on Friday, December 23rd. In addition to alumni of all ages and their guests, there were sandwiches, chips, salsa, pizza, and cookies for those who were hungry. There were silent auction items that included jewelry, sports tickets, clothing, lessons, baskets, coupons, a week at camp, and a ‘whimsey’. And there was a bar in the room, where alumni gathered to quench their thirst, see their old friends, and share memories of the past.

On that evening, the “Wild Earth” room at Potawatomi Casino lived up to its name. It was all for a good cause, too. With all the generous donations, \$3,098.57 was raised for our Alumni Campership Fund, which will be used to sponsor kids at camp this coming summer.

The 50/50 Raffle gave one lucky guest \$100. The Silent Auction (see list of donors that follows) included many bargains. A toaster went to the highest bidder at auction. And one lucky guest even turned her \$10 Free Play from the Casino into \$28. But everyone can agree that the real winners were the kids who will benefit from the event. Thanks to everyone for making this year’s fundraiser a success.



To insure that next year’s fundraiser is a success, please start thinking of Silent auction items you would be able to donate to the cause. Items, Services, Memberships, Tickets, and Artwork are just a few of the suggestions. A big ‘thank you’ to this year’s donors:

Anonymous
 Mary Kate Steinmiller
 John Meyer
 Julie Hoesly
 Hillary Loebenstein
 Barbara Quilling
 Alana Hammer
 Nina Shully
 Scott & Beth Shully
 Ryan Derus
 Scott Roeker
 Jen Feltz/Minikani
 Kevin Wright
 Tonieh Welland
 Gary Anderson
 Hilary Hendrickson
 Bill Halquist
 Mike Auda
 Evann Schwerm
 Jerry Burgher
 John Hyland
 Julia Goebels
 Chris Haworth

The MAC is a registered 501(c)3 Not-For-Profit Organization.

Alumni Business

Running an ‘organization’ as large as the MAC takes some effort. We have almost 400 people who have registered at our website, some 200 or so who have joined our alumni group on Facebook, and close to 80 who have signed up on our “Staff Lists”, available at the website. But there must be thousands of people who worked at Minikani and still aren’t part of our community. Here is what each and every one of you can do to help us grow:

- ◆ Please update your address changes. If you get a new email address, move to a new address, or change your name, please let us know so we can still communicate with you. It’s simple to do. On the lower left hand side of our Home Page at our website (see page 6), click on “Click Here to Come Home to Minikani” and fill out the brief form.
- ◆ Get in touch with just one person you know from working at camp and encourage them to register at our website. If everyone did this, our numbers could possibly double. Isn’t there someone you’ve kept in touch with over the years who would benefit from becoming a member of our community?
- ◆ In addition to your thoughtful personal contributions, you can check to see if your employer has gifting opportunities. Where Andy Gehl works, workers pay a nominal fee each Friday to ‘go casual’. Each month that money is donated to a different charity. Our Campership Fund recently received a check for \$731 from them - Thanks to Andy and his generous co-workers.



Best Gift for Kids

By Russell Roeder

(Editor’s Note: This article was originally published in the Patriot-News Op-Ed on 11/30/11, and was suggested by David Taus through Facebook.)

I think every parent should figure out a way to get their kid to a sleepaway summer camp. They should go for at least a week (two would be better), and certainly before the child turns 12. Summer camp is about more than fun, argues Russell Roeder.

Kids need to get out from under their parents’ wings to spread their own. Whether its soccer or baseball or dance lessons or music instruction or karate, our kids spend nearly every waking hour of every day being transported from one highly supervised activity to the next.



As parents, we’ve come to believe that all these structured activities somehow serve the dual purposes of building character and learning about focus and teamwork.

To some extent this is certainly true, but what parents don’t consider is the simple fact that the highly structured and hypercompetitive nature of these activities stifles the

most precious and promising elements of childhood: creativity and the joyful freedom to explore, experiment, stumble, recover and succeed on their own terms, and without the unspoken but omnipresent pressure to please us — their parents.



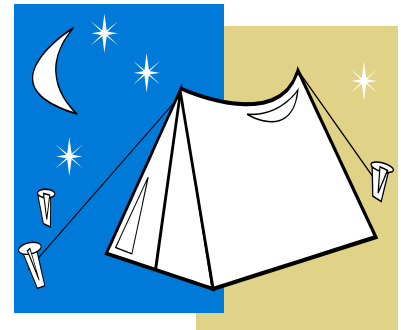
Disagree if you want, but I am pretty sure that if you’re honest you’ll admit that by the time they are 10, every kid has a fairly well-established place in the pecking order of the classroom and school yard. For the 10 percent of kids who are the combination of gregarious, athletic, good looking, funny and smart, this is wonderful. The other 90 percent face the uncertainties of how and where they are going to fit into the increasingly stressful social order.

As well-meaning parents, we do everything we possibly can to get our kids into a better and more competitive position in the social chain by signing them up for all those highly structured activities that we assume will give them a sense of success and bolster their self-esteem.

The problem is that I just don’t think you can manufacture self-esteem in kids. It is a personal discovery. And the more we as parents do to fill their days and structure their lives, the less time and opportunity they have to themselves to find it on their own.

What kids need is a place where they can learn about themselves without the continuous dotting eye

and well-intentioned judgment of their parents. They need to feel the weird and beautiful exhilaration that comes when you realize you are a stranger among strangers in a safe place and have nothing to lose or prove. You get to discover and be who you really are — not who your schoolmates, teachers and parents expect — or hope you will be.



Future Events

Camp Dinner Around the World

Saturday, March 3, 2012

Email Jason Horowitz to volunteer.

jasonhorowitz@gmail.com

Spring Work Day

Saturday, April 21, 2012

Camp Minikani

Bring the whole family to camp for this bi-annual Work Day. This day coincides with the LT Weekend.

Staff Training Alumni Dinner

Wednesday, June 13, 2012

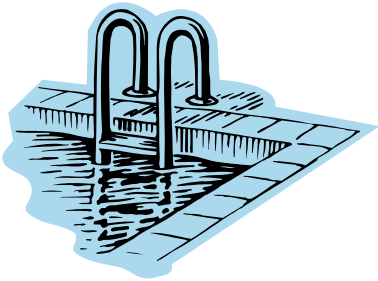
Camp Minikani

Come and meet the staff for Summer, 2012.

Camp Memories

By Michael Auda

When I was 11 years old I was at Camp with one of my Best Friends, Kevin Wright. (Many of you know Kevin by his nickname - Fathead.) Kevin and I grew up together at camp. We went through the LT program together, and later we both became counselors. But that year we had Chris O'Dell as our counselor in Cabin 16. (2 years later I would have Chris again as my Explorer Counselor.) But during the first of two weeks of that 5th session, Chris kept talking about us sneaking out of the cabin during Vespers and swimming in the pool. Every single kid in the cabin was very excited about the idea.



Finally, during the second week of the session, came the day that we were supposed to sneak out and go swimming in the pool. But then Chris came to the cabin and said that Kevin Casper, the Waterfront Director, told him that we were not allowed to swim in the pool after dark. At this point you can probably imagine how devastated we 11 year olds were. Some of us pushed back a little bit and we could tell Chris really wanted to do it as well. After some time Chris made up his mind and said that we were going to the pool regardless of what the Waterfront Director said. All of us got our swimming suits on and quietly set out for a stealth mission to the pool. Our route to get to the

pool was through the old shooting range area and then through the woods near the lower program office. During our time sneaking towards the pool we heard some other noises, but being 11 year olds, we didn't think much of it.



Once we arrived at the lower program office we all huddled up for Chris's instructions. Chris told us that he was going to count down from 10 seconds and that we were to run to the pool for a quick swim. Those 10 seconds seemed to last forever. As the countdown went down to 3-2-1, I was ready to run to that pool! Then, all of a sudden when Chris yelled "Run", the overhead pool lights turned on and kids from every direction joined us running towards the pool. I remember stopping and being absolutely amazed at what I was witnessing. Girls and boys from every cabin in camp were running all at once towards the pool. It was truly a sight to see.

As I look back at the event called the "Pool Sneak Out", I think about how much work it must have been for the staff to pull off something like that. It was one of the coolest things I have ever done at Camp Minikani, and it just goes to show the Magic that Minikani creates. Good Times!

Michael "MAUDA" Auda



New Alumni Website Coming

Yes, the Minikani Alumni Community will soon have yet another new website. We feel the new design will better serve your needs. Thanks to everyone who has already accessed the Alumni site at www.minikanistafflodge.com. In the near future, when you go to that 'url' you will see a brand new website. This 'state of the art' site will include everything the old site has and more. Watch your email for announcements about the new site.



Your Newsletter

Do you have a favorite camp memory? (Actually, who doesn't?) Maybe a better question would be, "Do you have a favorite camp memory that you could share with other Alumni?" If you can answer "Yes" to that question, then the Newsletter wants to hear from you. Other questions you may be able to answer "Yes" to are: "Do you know an Alumnus who we can 'Spotlight' in a future edition?" "Do you have questions about camp that we can research?" and "Can you suggest a future topic for the Newsletter?" You get the idea. This is your Newsletter – feel free to make a contribution. Send your email to BruceRass@wi.rr.com.



Minikani News

By Matt(Sully) Sullivan
Summer Camp Director

Greetings Alumni! We have some very exciting news from the home front about summer 2012! As you may know Minikani has gone through some changes within the past couple of years. We looked at the amount of change Minikani has seen and noticed the Summer Administrative (ad) staff structure needed to be revised.

Don't worry - we didn't take anything away, but we did add two positions that will help the summer run more smoothly. These positions will help to improve areas of camp and will also allow the continuous development in bettering camp's programs. As Minikani grows in numbers, the new additions will provide insurance just in case the unexpected happens during the summer. (To the right you will find the two jobs and some info on what they will be doing at camp this upcoming summer!!)



Position: Skills Director

- Oversees skill heads, ensuring all skills are following expected safety standards.
- Assists in daily skill functions. Monitors supervision and skill progression.
- Monitors supply inventory and reporting to (SCD) if supplies are needed.
- Improves communication & ensures programs are on target with planning and supplies. (weekly skills meeting)
- Evaluation of staff and how progression is developing in areas.

Position: Trips Director

- Oversees all programs that go off camp, ensuring all are following expected safety standards.
- Assists in pre-trip functions. Monitoring supervision and trips progression.
- Monitor supply inventory, damages and reporting to (SCD) if supplies/repairs are needed.
- Improve communication & ensure programs have adequate itineraries and maps of trip location. (pre-trip meetings)
- Pre and current summer trip visits. (Master Explorer, explorer, and LT trips.)
- Evaluation of staff and how progression is developing in areas.

Here is the Summer 2012 Ad Staff list:

Skills Director: Sarah Whaley, **Trips Director:** Dane Mantia, **Boys Unit Director:** Tom Cramer, **Girls Unit Director:** Grace Edquist, **Day Camp Directors:** Morgan Cox & Wyatt Caldwell, **Explorer Directors:** Andrew Gebel, Catherine Kistler, Kevin Jennings, **Mini Camp Director:** Lauren Schoendorf, **Leadership Directors:** Amanda Hendrickson & Jeremy Ledbetter, **Outdoor Leadership Directors:** David Ruiz & Sharon Cross, **Water Front Skill Head:** Michael Luckey, **Gun & Run Skill Head:** Ryan Wnuk, **Adventure Challenge Skill Head:** Sarah Burton, **Crafts Skill Head:** Ryan Costello, **Wilderness Skill Area:** Skills director & Staff Led, **Corral:** Looking for qualified person.

Nature Notes

By Bruce

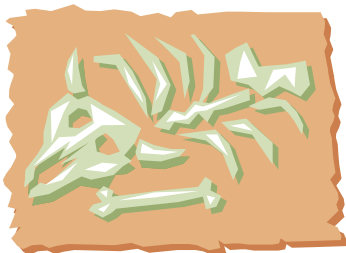
Her very acute hearing detects a tiny rustle in the dried grass. Although many yards away, she leans off her perch and heads down for the kill. With softly muffled wings it takes but a moment. Suddenly seized by the sharp talons, the mouse doesn't stand a chance.

You've probably already guessed who this killing machine is – a Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*).



What you probably remember from Nature Skills at Minikani is what comes next: The mouse is swallowed without chewing – although some careful 'tearing' may take place. Strong stomach muscles then separate the mouse's flesh from its bones and hair, which are regurgitated 8 to 12 hours later.

Very likely this scene is taking place in the pine-tree-tops of Pine Forest right now. The bones and fur, forced together as a 'pellet', drop to the forest floor and will lay there until a camper playing Capture the Flag happens to look down and sees the grizzly remains – the infamous "mouse bones" of Pine Forest.



Actually much of this carnage takes place in the wintertime. Owls are the earliest birds in our state to produce eggs. The mother will lay 1-4 mostly round, white eggs late in early January, and the young hatch about 33 days later – during the coldest months of the year.



Because it is so cold at the time of nesting, incubation begins immediately after each egg is laid. As a consequence the eggs hatch in sequence, which gives the first hatchling a size advantage over its siblings. If food is scarce, the largest will out-compete the others for food that the parents bring back to the nest and only one may survive. Without much protective cover, the mice and other rodents are fairly easy to prey on in the winter, and the long nights provide the owls with plenty of opportunity to hunt for their growing young.



The design used for Minikani's Rag Program blends four well-known shapes - the traditional YMCA triangle (representing spirit, mind and body); the square-to signify the four-square life of a Ragger (spiritual, mental, physical and social); the circle representing the circle of friendship amongst Raggars; and the cross symbolizing the center of the Christian's life.



Camp History

In 1945, in an attempt to heighten the spiritual emphasis of Camp Minikani, Executive Director Harold Williams and Program Director W.H. "Daddy" Wones improved the graces before meals, built a chapel beside the nature lodge, and encouraged counselors to give a "password" once a week, a practice which now takes place each morning.



Check Out These Websites

www.minikanistafflodge.com
 This is the main site for the Minikani Alumni Community. Once here, you can click to join the official mailing list. You can also keep up-to-date on all the current happenings of the Community.

www.minikani.org
 This is the official web site of YMCA Camp Minikani. You can get information on dates for summer camp, check out Minikani's blog, and enjoy a collection of Alumni Photos.